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filed March 5, 1997 and of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/102,413, filed September 30, 1998.--

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please cancel claim 7 and amend claims 12, 17, 18, 22 and 25 as follows:

12. A method for preparing a target protein with a C-terminal thioester, comprising:

- (a) expressing a recombinant precursor protein in a host cell, the precursor protein comprising the target protein fused to an intein and optionally a binding protein domain, the intein being selected from a naturally occurring intein, an intein derivative or an intein mutant, wherein the intein is capable of thiol induced cleavage; and
- (b) contacting the expressed precursor protein with a thiol reagent and inducing cleavage of the intein from the precursor protein so as to form the target protein having the C-terminal thioester.

17. A method for expressing a recombinant precursor protein, comprising:

inserting a nucleic acid sequence encoding a target protein into a plasmid at a multiple cloning site located upstream of and